

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 INR-05 DHA-02 AF-04
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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8047
INFO THE WHITE HOUSE WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 5989

LIMDIS

WHITE HOUSE FOR NSC ROBERT PASTOR

DEPARTMENT PASS TO ASST. SEC. TODMAN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR
SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT PEREZ, JUNE 11

1. FOLLOWING PRESIDENT PEREZ' DINNER FOR MRS. CARTER
JUNE 11, HE ASKED FOREIGN MINISTER ESCOVAR, ASST. SEC.
TODMAN, ROBERT PASTOR AND THE AMBASSADOR TO REMAIN
BEHIND. AFTER GUESTS HAD LEFT, THE GROUP TALKED INFORMALLY
FOR OVER TWO HOURS. PRESIDENT PEREZ (CAP) WAS IN AN
EXPANSIVE MOOD AND TALKED AT LENGTH ABOUT A WIDE RANGE
OF TOPICS. MOST OF HIS COMMENTS WERE REPEATED IN THIS
TWO CONVERSATIONS WITH MRS. CARTER (CARACAS 5872 AND
5903), AND ARE NOT REPEATED HERE. THESE ITEMS WERE
HUMAN RIGHTS AND GRENADA, CUBA AND US RELATIONS WITH
THAT COUNTRY, AFRICA, THE CARIBBEAN AND THE CUBAN THREAT,
BELIZE, PANAMA, ENERGY AND THE TAR BELT. CAP DID
HOWEVER MAKE COMMENTS ON OTHER TOPICS OR ADDITIONAL
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ANGELS THAT WERE NOT REPEATED ELSEWHERE, AND THESE ARE
SUMMARIZED BELOW GROUPED BY TOPIC:

2. SOUTHERN CONE AND HUMAN RIGHTS. CAP REFERRED TO
OPERATION BEACON, THE EFFORT OF THE SOUTHERN CONE
COUNTRIES TO ORGANIZE A FRONT AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY
BY STRESSING NON-INTERVENTION. HE CHARACTERIZED ARGENTINA'S

ROLE AS A CONSTRUCTIVE ONE IN ALL OF HIS, AND NOTED THAT VIDELA HAD SENT TWO EMISSARIES TO HIM (CAP). ONE REPORTED THE INITIAL SUGGESTION (WHICH CAP REMAINS CONVINCED IS OF BRAZILIAN INSPIRATION) AND ARGENTINA'S TACTIC OF INSISTING THAT THE PROPOSED MEETING BE BROADENED TO INCLUDE OTHER SOUTH AMERICAN NATIONS INCLUDING VENEZUELA AND COLOMBIA. THE SECOND CAME TO INVITE THE GOV TO THE MEETING OF FOREIGN MINISTERS. CAP SAID HE NOT ONLY DECLINED BUT ADVISED VIDELA NOT TO GET MIXED UP IN THESE THINGS. CAPT OFFERED TO PROVIDE US WITH THE PROPOSED AGENDA FOR OPERATION BEACON.

3. ARGENTINA AND VIDELA. CAP STRESSED THAT VIDELA SHOULD RECEIVE OUR SUPPORT BECAUSE HE IS THE BEST HOPE ARGENTINA HAS FOR RETURNING TO NORMALITY AND DEMOCRACY. CAP SAID VIDELA TOLD HIM HE WOULD MOVE TOWARD AN EVENTUAL CALL FOR ELECTIONS. ALL THE PROBABLE ALTERNATIVES TO VIDELA ARE BAD; IF HE FELL HE WOULD BE REPLACED BY EITHER AN EXTREME LEFT GOVERNMENT OR, MORE PROBABLY, AN EXTREME RIGHTIST, PINOCHET-LIKE REGIME.

4. REGIONAL NUCLEAR ENERGY EFFORT. IN DISCUSSING THE PROBLEM OF NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION AND THE BRAZILIAN AND ARGENTINE ACQUISITION OF NUCLEAR POWER TECHNOLOGY, CAP SUGGESTED THAT A LATIN AMERICAN MULTILATERAL FACILITY MIGHT BE ESTABLISHED TO PROVIDE FUEL AND OTHERWISE COORDINATE TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER. HE SUGGESTED THIS MIGHT BE SELA, ALTHOUGH THE OTHERS PRESENT SUGGESTED OPANAL AS A LOGICAL ENTITY. CAP SAID HE THOUGHT THIS SHOULD CONFIDENTIAL

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BE EXPLORED, PERHAPS IN GRENADA.

5. COSTA RICA. CAP SAID HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY IN COSTA RICA. HE THOUGHT PEPE FIGUERES MIGHT BE UP TO SOMETHING, AND HE RECALLED THAT LAST FALL PRESIDENT ODUBER HAD TOLD HIM THAT FIGUERES HAD BEEN PLOTTING AGAINST HIM AND WAS TRYING TO USE CUBAN EXILES IN AN EFFORT TO TAKE POWER. AS STRANGE AS THIS SOUNDS, CAP SAID, HE DID THINK DON PEPE WAS "CRAZY". ODUBER, HE SAID, WAS A GOOD MAN BUT VERY CAUTIOUS. LUIS ALBERTO MONGE WAS ALSO A GOOD MAN, BUT HE WAS NOT SURE HOW DECISIVE AND STRONG. HE SHARPLY CRITICIZED THE MAIN OPPOSITION CANDIDATE, RODRIGO CARRAZO. TWICE CAP ASKED, "WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP COSTA RICA?" HE OFFERED NO SUGGESTIONS NOR ANY MORE PRECISE DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEMS, OTHER THAN THE INTIMATION THAT SOMEONE LIKE FIGUERES WAS PLOTTING SOMETHING.

6. VESCO. IN CONNECTION WITH HIS APPREHENSION ABOUT COSTA RICA, CAP SAID VESCO HAD TO LEAVE BECAUSE HE

WAS A CORRUPTING INFLUENCE. HE SAID HE WAS GOING TO CALL ODUBER AND URGE HIM TO EXPEL VESCO. HE SAID, HALF-JOKINGLY, THAT IF ODUBER NEEDED A PLACE TO SEND HIM HE (CAP) WOULD OFFER TO TAKE VESCO AND THEN HE WOULD PROMPTLY DEPORT HIM TO THE US.

7. GUYANA. CAP EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE GUYANESE SITUATION IN THE CONTEXT OF HIS WORRIES ABOUT THE CARIBBEAN AREA GENERALLY. HE SAID HE WANTED TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEMS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AS TO THE BORDER AREA AND HAD ABOUT DECIDED TO MOVE QUICKLY AND BOLDLY NOW. WHAT HE HAS IN MIND IS AN OVERALL SETTLEMENT WHICH WOULD INVOLVE A MINOR TERRITORIAL ADJUSTMENT ON THE CARIBBEAN COAST TO STRAIGHTEN OUT THE BORDER LINE TO THE COAST (IN VENEZUELA'S FAVOR) AND AGREEMENT FOR JOINT ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION OF THE RIVER BASINS IN THE SOUTH. BURNHAM HAS BEEN ASKING FOR SOME TIME TO COME TO CARACAS TO
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TALK TO CAP, BUT HE HAS HELD HIM OFF UP TO NOW. NOW, HOWEVER, CAP SAID, HE WAS GOING TO TAKE INITIATIVE TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR A RAPID SETTLEMENT IF HE COULD.

8. BORDONI. APPRAISED OF THE GREAT DELAYS IN THE BORDONI EXTRADITION CASE, HE TOLD THE FOREIGN MINISTER TO CHECK ON THIS AND SEE IF THE PROCESS CANNOT BE SPEEDED UP.

9. PORTUGUESE FINANCING. CAP SAID VENEZUELA WOULD BE REPRESENTED AT THE SECOND PARIS MEETING OF POTENTIAL DONORS. HE WAS SYMPATHETIC TO PORTUGAL'S PLIGHT. IN BOTH THIS CASE AND THAT OF POSSIBLE COOPERATION FOR AID TO JAMAICA (CARACAS 5903) CAP SAID HE RECOGNIZED THAT THE COMMITMENTS OF OTHER COUNTRIES WERE MUTUALLY REINFORCING ON OTHER POTENTIAL DONORS, AND THAT THE US CONGRESS WAS MORE LIKELY TO APPROPRIATE THE SIZEABLE FUNDS BEING REQUESTED IF IT FELT OTHER NATIONS WERE ALSO CONTRIBUTING.
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